

ES 3.1 Parental Labor Force Participation

Over the last three decades, the proportion of single-parent families has increased, as has the proportion of mothers who work regardless of marital status.²³ These factors have reduced the percentage of children who have a parent at home full-time. Figure ES 3.1.A presents data on the percentage of children who have at least one parent in the *labor force* by family structure, while Figure ES 3.1.B shows the percentage of children with no resident parent in the labor force.

Differences by Family Type. Between 1985 and 2000, the percentage of children who have both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force increased from 59 percent to 68 percent (see Table ES 3.1.A). Between 1990 and 1996, this percentage was similar for married-couple families and single-mother families; however, the rate for single-mother families increased sharply from 66 percent in 1996 to 79 percent in 2000, while the rate for married-couple families had little variation over the same time period (64 percent in 1996 and 64 percent in 2000). The rate for children in single-father families was much higher, at 90 percent in 2000. Between 1994 and 2000, there was a large and statistically significant decline in the proportion of children living in families in which no resident parent was attached to the labor force, as shown in Table ES 3.1.B.

Differences by Age of Child. Children under age 6 have been less likely than older children to have both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force (see Table ES 3.1.A). In 2000, 62 percent of children under age 6 had both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force, compared with 71 percent for older children. However, the differences between these two age groups has lessened between 1985 and 2000.

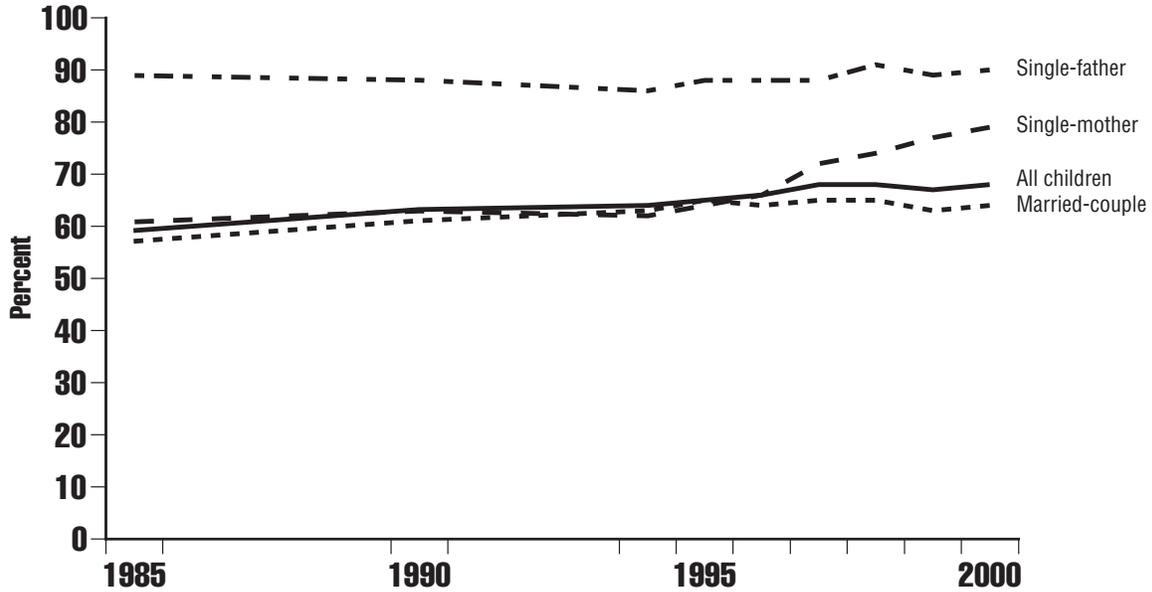
Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.²⁴ Between 1985 and 1990, White children, Black children, and Hispanic children all became more likely to have both parents or only the resident parent in the labor force (see Table ES 3.1.A). Between 1990 and 1996, the rates stayed virtually the same for Blacks and Hispanics and increased modestly for Whites. However, the rate for all three groups increased between 1996 and 2000, with especially large increases for Blacks and Hispanics. Between 1996 and 2000, the rate for Black children of all ages increased from 64 percent to 74 percent, and the rate for Black children under age 6 increased from 58 percent to 72 percent. Between 1996 and 2000, the rate for Hispanic children of all ages increased from 50 percent to 59 percent. By 2000, 67 percent of White children, 74 percent of Black children, and 59 percent of Hispanic children lived in families in which all resident parents were working.

²³ Bianchi, S.M. 1995. Changing Economic Roles of Women and Men. In *State of the Union: America in the 1990s*, Volume 1 (Reynolds Farley, ed.). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

²⁴ Estimates for Whites and Blacks include Hispanics of those races. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Figure ES 3.1.A

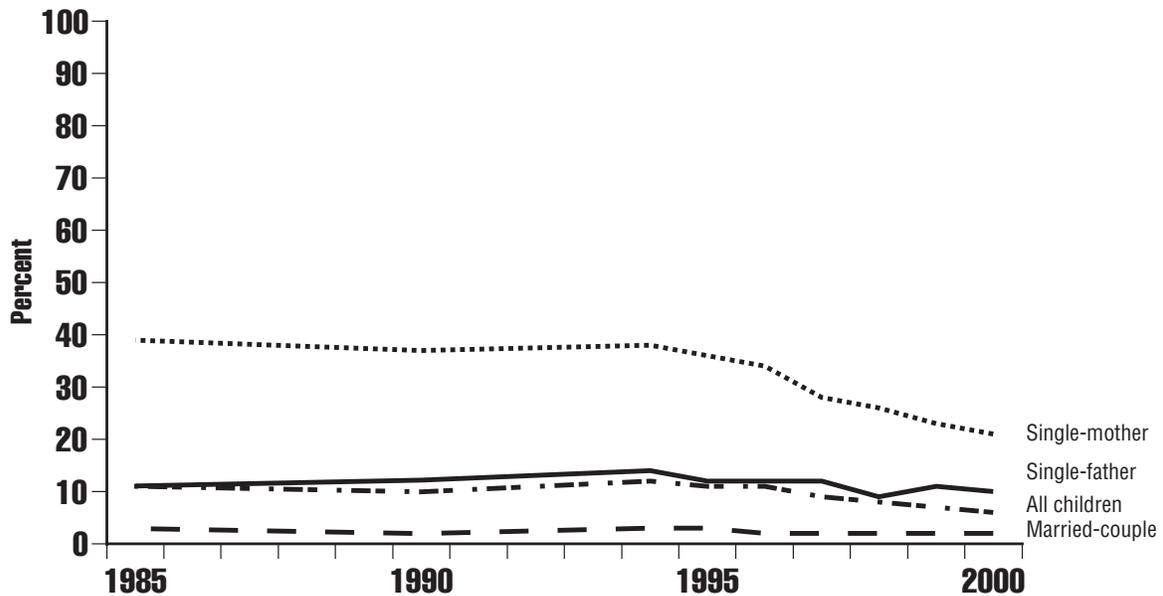
Percentage of children under age 18 in the United States with both parents or only resident parent in the labor force, by family structure: Selected years, 1985-2000



Sources: 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 statistics based on the March 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 *Current Population Surveys*; 1996-2000 statistics calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on the 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2000 *Current Population Surveys*.

Figure ES 3.1.B

Percentage of children under age 18 in the United States with no resident parent in the labor force, by family structure: Selected years, 1985-2000



Sources: 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 statistics based on the March 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 *Current Population Surveys*; 1996-2000 statistics calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on the 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2000 *Current Population Surveys*.

Parental Employment

Table ES 3.1.A

Percentage of children in the United States with both parents or only resident parent in the labor force, by age, family structure, and race and Hispanic origin:^a Selected years, 1985-2000

	1985	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
All children	59	63	64	65	66	68	68	67	68
Under age 6	51	55	56	59	58	61	62	61	62
Ages 6-17	63	67	68	69	70	71	71	71	71
Family structure									
Married-couple	57	61	63	65	64	65	65	63	64
Under age 6	51	54	57	59	58	58	58	56	57
Ages 6-17	61	65	67	68	67	69	68	67	67
Single-mother	61	63	62	64	66	72	74	77	79
Under age 6	49	51	52	54	56	65	67	71	73
Ages 6-17	67	70	68	69	72	76	77	79	81
Single-father	89	88	86	88	88	88	91	89	90
Under age 6	90	90	85	86	86	89	94	94	94
Ages 6-17	89	88	86	88	89	88	90	87	89
Race and Hispanic origin^a									
White	59	63	64	66	66	68	68	66	67
Under age 6	51	55	57	59	58	61	61	59	61
Ages 6-17	63	67	68	70	70	71	71	70	71
Black	60	63	62	64	64	71	73	75	74
Under age 6	54	55	56	57	58	68	71	74	72
Ages 6-17	63	67	66	67	68	73	75	76	74
Hispanic	45	50	49	50	50	54	58	57	59
Under age 6	40	44	41	44	43	49	52	51	53
Ages 6-17	48	54	54	54	55	57	62	60	63

^a Estimates for Whites and Blacks include Hispanics of those races. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Sources: 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 statistics based on the March 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 *Current Population Surveys*; 1996-2000 statistics calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on the 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2000 *Current Population Surveys*.

Table ES 3.1.B

Percentage of children in the United States with no resident parent in the labor force, by age, family structure, and race and Hispanic origin:^a Selected years, 1985-2000

	1985	1990	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
All children	11	10	12	11	11	9	8	7	6
Under age 6	12	13	14	14	13	10	9	7	6
Ages 6-17	10	9	11	10	9	8	8	7	6
Family structure									
Married-couple	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Under age 6	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Ages 6-17	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
Single-mother	39	37	38	36	34	28	26	23	21
Under age 6	51	49	48	46	44	35	33	29	27
Ages 6-17	33	30	32	31	28	24	23	21	19
Single-father	11	12	14	12	12	12	9	11	10
Under age 6	10	10	15	14	14	11	6	6	6
Ages 6-17	11	12	14	12	11	12	10	13	12
Race and Hispanic origin^a									
White	8	7	9	8	7	7	7	5	5
Under age 6	8	9	11	10	9	7	7	5	5
Ages 6-17	7	6	8	7	7	6	6	5	5
Black	27	26	27	27	25	20	17	15	14
Under age 6	33	34	33	33	32	23	20	17	15
Ages 6-17	24	21	24	23	21	18	15	15	13
Hispanic	19	17	19	19	17	14	13	11	9
Under age 6	20	19	22	21	20	15	14	11	9
Ages 6-17	19	16	18	17	15	13	13	11	9

^a Estimates for Whites and Blacks include Hispanics of those races. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Sources: 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 statistics based on the March 1985, 1990, 1994, and 1995 *Current Population Surveys*; 1996-2000 statistics calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on the 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2000 *Current Population Surveys*.

ES 3.2 Maternal Employment

Over the last several decades, the increasing proportion of mothers moving into employment has had substantial consequences for the everyday lives of families with children. Maternal employment adds to the financial resources available to families and is often the only source of income for families headed by single mothers—although if child-care services are purchased and unsubsidized, they may offset a substantial percentage of low-wage mothers' earnings.

Maternal employment rates for all mothers with children under age 18 increased steadily from 53 percent to 63 percent between 1980 and 1990 (see Figure ES 3.2). From 1995 to 2000, rates increased at a slower pace from 66 percent to 70 percent. This pattern of increasing maternal employment was evident for all mothers, regardless of the age of their children.

Differences by Age of Child. The percentage of mothers who are employed increases with the age of the youngest child for all time periods presented in Table ES 3.2. In 2000, 58 percent of mothers with children under age 3 were employed, compared with 68 percent and 76 percent for mothers with youngest children ages 3-5 and 6-17, respectively.

Differences by Marital Status. Throughout the period between 1980 and 2000, divorced mothers had higher rates of employment than never-married or currently married mothers (see Table ES 3.2). However, the gap narrowed over the period as employment increased from 62 percent to 69 percent for married mothers and from 40 percent to 66 percent for never-married mothers.

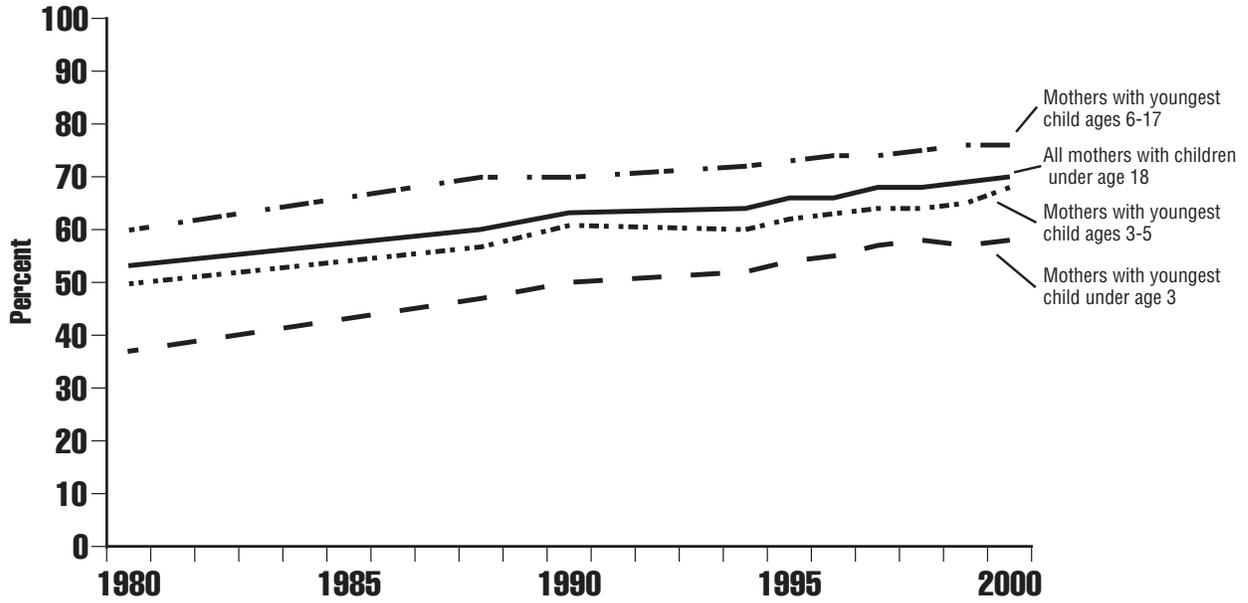
Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.²⁵ In 2000, 69 percent of White mothers, 72 percent of Black mothers, and 57 percent of Hispanic mothers were employed (see Table ES 3.2). Black mothers were the most likely to be employed full-time (62 percent). All three groups have experienced a steady rate of growth during the 1990s.

Differences by Employment Status. Among all employed mothers, 51 percent were working full-time in 2000 (see Table ES 3.2). Employed mothers with older children were more likely to work full-time than those with young children, with rates ranging from 38 percent for mothers with children under age 3, to 58 percent for mothers with a youngest child between the ages of 6 and 17. Divorced mothers were more likely to work full-time (70 percent) than never-married mothers (52 percent) and married mothers (49 percent). Black mothers who were employed were more likely to work full-time (62 percent) than White mothers (49 percent) or Hispanic mothers (46 percent).

²⁵ Estimates for Whites and Blacks include Hispanics of those races. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Figure ES 3.2

Percentage of mothers in the United States with children under age 18 who were employed, by age of youngest child:
Selected years, 1980-2000



Source: Unpublished tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on analyses of March Current Population Surveys for 1980, 1988, 1990, and 1994-2000.

Parental Employment

Table ES 3.2

Percentage of mothers in the United States with children under age 18 who were employed, full-time and part-time,^a by age of youngest child, marital status, and race and Hispanic origin:^b Selected years, 1980-2000

	1980	1988	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Total employed	53	60	63	66	66	68	68	69	70
Working full-time	—	44	46	43	47	50	50	50	51
Working part-time	—	16	17	19	19	18	19	18	18
Age of youngest child									
Under age 3	37	47	50	54	55	57	58	57	58
Working full-time	—	32	34	35	36	38	39	37	38
Working part-time	—	15	16	19	19	19	19	20	19
Ages 3-5	50	57	61	62	63	64	64	65	68
Working full-time	—	40	43	42	43	47	46	46	50
Working part-time	—	17	18	20	20	18	18	19	18
Ages 6-17	60	70	70	73	74	74	75	76	76
Working full-time	—	53	53	53	55	56	57	58	58
Working part-time	—	17	17	19	19	18	18	18	18
Marital status									
Married, spouse present	62	63	66	67	68	69	68	68	69
Working full-time	—	43	44	45	46	48	48	48	49
Working part-time	—	19	19	22	21	20	20	20	20
Never married	40	45	46	48	49	57	62	65	66
Working full-time	—	32	36	35	35	43	46	49	52
Working part-time	—	8	9	13	14	14	15	16	14
Divorced	75	75	74	77	79	77	78	80	83
Working full-time	—	66	66	64	66	65	66	69	70
Working part-time	—	9	9	13	13	12	12	12	13
Race and Hispanic origin^b									
White	52	62	63	67	67	69	68	69	69
Working full-time	—	44	44	46	47	48	48	49	49
Working part-time	—	18	19	21	21	20	20	20	20
Black	54	56	61	62	63	65	70	71	72
Working full-time	—	48	53	50	52	55	58	58	62
Working part-time	—	8	8	11	10	10	12	13	11
Hispanic	42	49	50	49	49	53	55	55	57
Working full-time	—	38	39	37	37	41	43	42	46
Working part-time	—	11	11	12	12	12	13	13	11

^a Percentages for 1980 are not presented separately by marital status and full-time versus part-time due to incompatibilities with definitions used in later years. Sums may not add to totals due to rounding.

Source: Unpublished tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics, based on analyses of March Current Population Surveys for 1980, 1988, 1990, and 1994-2000.

ES 3.3 Child Care

Due to the increasing percentage of young children with two parents (or a single resident parent) participating in the labor force, finding adequate child care has become essential. Between the years 1985 and 1995 a vast array of child care arrangements were utilized by families with working mothers. The four most commonly used provisions: parental care, care by a relative, use of an organized facility, and care by a nonrelative, serviced more than 9 million children during the period.

Differences by Family Type. In 1995, children of married employed mothers were most likely to receive care in an organized facility (30 percent), whereas single employed mothers favored non-relative arrangements (30 percent). The children of married employed mothers were more likely to receive care from relatives than the children of single employed mothers, 28 percent and 19 percent respectively (see Table ES 3.3B).

Differences by Race and Hispanic Origin.²⁶ Hispanic families were less likely than Black, non-Hispanic families to use organized facilities such as day care centers and preschools. In 1995, 21 percent of Hispanic children of working mothers were cared for in day care centers and preschools, compared with 32 percent of Black, non-Hispanic children (see Table ES 3.3B). White, non-Hispanic families were most likely to use non-relative arrangements (29.5 percent) whereas Hispanics were most likely to use relative and non-relative arrangements as their primary child care options (25.7 percent and 25.1 percent respectively).

Differences by Age of Child. Relatives usually care for employed mothers' children before their first birthday. In 1995, 43 percent of infants were cared for by relatives either inside or outside the child's home (see Table ES 3.3A). Among toddlers (ages 1-2), 47 percent were cared for by relatives, 35 percent were cared for by other non-relatives, and 23 percent in an organized facility. Among children of preschool age (ages 3-4), 39 percent were cared for by relatives, another 31 percent in day care centers and preschools, and 26 percent by non-relatives (see Figure ES 3.3).

Differences by Poverty Status. Children of families below the poverty level were most often cared for by relatives (29 percent) and in organized facilities (26 percent). Alternatively, children of families above the poverty level often were cared for through non-relative arrangements (30 percent) and in organized facilities (25 percent) (see Table ES 3.3B). In 1995, recipients of Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) were much more likely to use relatives for child care (35 percent) and organized facilities (32 percent). Similar to the child care preferences of families above the poverty line; AFDC non-recipients preferred using nonrelative arrangements and organized facilities, 29 percent and 25 percent respectively. Families with a monthly income of \$4,500 or more overwhelmingly chose to use nonrelative arrangements (35 percent) whereas families with a monthly income less than \$1,500 most often used relatives as their child care providers (27 percent).

²⁶ Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Table ES 3.3.A

Percentage distribution of child care arrangements of children under age 5 in the United States with employed mothers:
Selected years, 1985-1995

Type of Arrangement	Winter 1985	Fall 1988	Fall 1990	Fall 1991	Fall 1993	Fall 1995 ^b
Number of Children (in thousands)	8,168	9,488	9,629	9,854	9,937	10,047
Parents	23.8	22.7	22.9	28.7	22.1	22.0
Mother while working	8.1	7.6	6.4	8.7	6.2	5.4
Father	15.7	15.1	16.5	20.0	15.9	16.6
Relatives	24.1	21.1	23.1	23.5	26.0	21.4
Grandparent	15.9	13.9	14.3	15.8	17.0	15.9
Sibling and other relative	8.2	7.2	8.8	7.7	9.0	5.5
Organized Facility	23.1	25.8	27.5	23.1	29.9	25.1
Day care center	14.0	16.6	20.6	15.8	18.3	17.7
Nursery/Preschool	9.1	9.2	6.9	7.3	11.6	5.9
Federal Head Start program ^a	—	—	—	—	—	1.5
Other Nonrelative Care	28.2	28.9	25.1	23.3	21.6	28.4
In child's home	5.9	5.3	5.0	5.4	5.0	4.9
In provider's home	22.3	23.6	20.1	17.9	16.6	23.5
Family day care ^a	—	—	—	—	—	15.7
Other nonrelative	—	—	—	—	—	7.8
Other	0.8	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.2	3.0
Self care	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1
Other arrangement ^c	0.8	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.2	0.6
No regular arrangement	—	—	—	—	—	2.2

Note: 1995 was the first year for which family day care and Head Start were separate response categories.

— = Not available.

^b To make the 1995 data consistent with prior surveys, the 1995 distribution was proportionately redistributed to account for tied responses for the primary arrangement to make the percentage total to 100 percent.

^c Includes children in kindergarten/grade school or in a school-based activity.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Surveys*, Series P-70, No. 70, (Table 5).

Parental Employment

Table ES 3.3.B

Percentage distribution of child care arrangements of children under age 5 in the United States with employed mothers, by selected characteristics: 1995

	Mother While Working ^a	Father	Other Relative	Organized Facility ^b	Other Non-relative	Other Care Arrangement ^c
All preschoolers	5.4	16.6	21.4	25.1	28.4	3.0
Race and Hispanic origin^d						
White, non-Hispanic	6.1	17.8	19.3	24.6	29.5	2.7
Black, non-Hispanic	2.2	9.1	26.4	31.9	28.3	2.0
Hispanic	3.6	19.1	25.7	20.7	25.1	5.8
Other	7.1	18.4	27.9	17.5	25.5	3.7
Age of child						
Under 1 year	3.8	18.6	24.1	14.6	35.4	3.5
Ages 1-2	6.2	18.1	22.2	22.7	28.7	2.0
Ages 3-4	5.3	14.7	19.3	31.1	26.1	3.5
Marital status						
Married, husband present	2.8	10.6	27.9	29.9	26.4	2.4
All other marital statuses ^e	6.3	18.9	19.0	23.2	29.6	3.1
Educational attainment						
Less than high school	6.4	18.3	32.4	17.1	21.0	4.8
High school, 4 years	5.7	16.8	25.8	25.6	23.4	2.7
College, 1-3 years	4.9	18.6	19.8	25.5	27.9	3.2
College, 4 or more years	5.3	14.6	14.7	26.1	37.1	2.3
Poverty status^f						
Below poverty	4.4	20.1	29.4	25.6	17.0	3.5
Above poverty	5.6	16.5	20.3	24.8	30.1	2.9
Monthly family income^f						
Less than \$1,500	3.0	19.7	26.9	24.5	23.5	2.5
\$1,500 to \$2,999	7.1	19.3	23.3	24.3	21.6	4.4
\$3,000 to \$4,499	5.1	17.3	22.8	22.9	29.4	2.5
\$4,500 and over	5.3	13.8	16.7	26.7	35.2	2.3
Program participation						
AFDC recipient	0.8	8.3	34.7	31.6	22.6	2.0
AFDC nonrecipient	5.6	17.1	20.7	24.6	28.9	2.9

^a Includes mothers working at home or away from home.

^b Includes day care centers, nursery and preschools, and Head Start programs.

^c Includes preschoolers in kindergarten, grade school, self care, and those with no regular arrangement.

^d Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

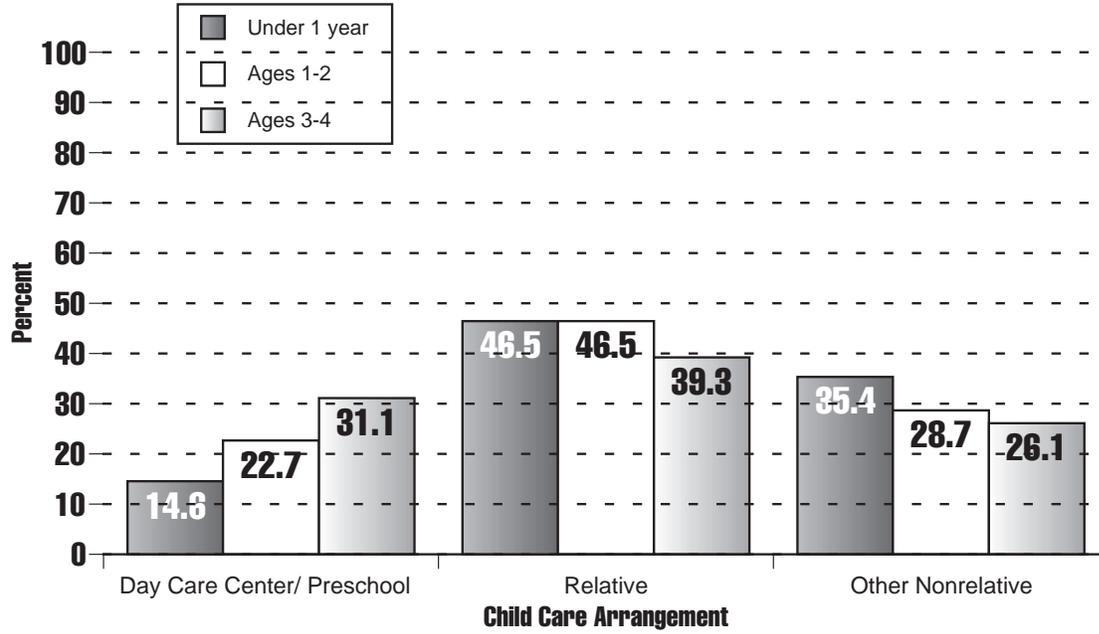
^e Includes married, spouse absent, widowed, separated, divorced, and never married.

^f Omits preschoolers whose families did not report income.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Surveys*, Series P-70, No. 70, (PPL Tables).

Figure ES 3.3

Percentage distribution of child care arrangements of children under age 5 in the United States with employed mothers, by age of child: 1995



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Surveys*, Series P-70, No. 70, (PPL Tables).